

January 1989

Reviews, Critiques, and Annotations

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Recommended Citation

Moltke-Hansen, David; Jackson, Harvey H.; Lachatanere, Diana; and Phillips, Faye, "Reviews, Critiques, and Annotations," *Provenance, Journal of the Society of Georgia Archivists* 7 no. 2 (1989).

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/provenance/vol7/iss2/10>

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REVIEWS, CRITIQUES, AND ANNOTATIONS

Oglethorpe in Perspective: Georgia's Founder after Two Hundred Years. Phinizy Spalding and Harvey H. Jackson, eds. Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 1989. Pp. viii, 244; illus.; \$26.95.

A first glance at this volume is misleading. Both because most of the ten essayists have written extensively before on the subjects they address here and because a breezy introduction and the brief editorial synopses at the head of each essay seem designed to capture and help nonspecialists, one might well suppose that the volume is intended to extend the reach, rather than add to the sum, of scholarship. A quick glance at the endnotes only strengthens this first impression: the thirty-three pages largely refer to published primary and secondary sources; there are few citations of manuscript materials.

One should not be misled, however. Not only would it be almost impossible to get the clear focus on Oglethorpe provided here simply by reading the other works of the several contributors, but by reflecting on Oglethorpe from the perspectives of their very different specialities, the authors make their other work meaningful in new ways.

What this volume does is both put Oglethorpe in various contexts and examine several of these contexts--the frontier,

religion, warfare, slavery, Indian relations--from his evolving point of view as a Georgia trustee and military officer. The results are a more complex and fully realized character and a more dynamic picture of Georgia's first two decades as a British colony than were possible as recently as a few years ago.

What is not yet possible is to see Oglethorpe and Georgia through the eyes of the Spanish, French, and others who acted on, and reacted to, Georgia's founder and his colony. Though Indian viewpoints do begin to emerge in intriguing ways, there are almost no references to the French, Spanish, Austrian, and Prussian archival holdings here. Clearly, these are new frontiers to be explored in the ongoing recovery of Georgia's infancy and Oglethorpe's engrossing life story.

As clearly, Georgia's colonial historians and Oglethorpe's biographers have done a remarkable job, not only of mining but also of seeing brought into print the English language records feeding their stories. Most references to original sources in these essays are to materials now available in print. The largest bodies of unpublished papers cited are the Phillips Collection of Egmont Papers in the University of Georgia Libraries, some remaining manuscript colonial records of Georgia, the papers of James Boswell at Yale, the Sir Andrew Mitchell Papers in the British Library, and the William H. Lyttleton Papers at the University of Michigan. Given what remains, it seems entirely possible that by Georgia's tercentenary the printed record might be extended to incorporate most of the relevant portions of these and other holdings.

More noteworthy for archivists is the way this collection of essays extends the record by giving close scrutiny to maps, engravings, portraits, and other iconographic materials. Not used merely to illustrate as so often in the past, these materials here (and in other works by some of these same essayists) become windows on political and diplomatic motivation and perception as well as on values and expectations. The opening of these

windows has let fresh air into the study where Georgia's origins and early development are still being pored over to advantage.

In the face of such contributions, it seems almost mean spirited to observe that the book could have been produced to better advantage. Illustrations are neither as clear nor as effective as they might be. A more ambitious, less breezy introduction might better have prepared the reader to appreciate what follows. The headnotes to each essay might better have been included in a section of that expanded introduction, so that the reader could gain in one place a sense of what he or she would encounter in the volume as a whole. Finally, a book aimed not only at specialists but also at a wider audience should not appear academic; this one physically does, despite the verbal gambits to put the nonspecialist at ease.

To criticize the serving of the food is not to criticize the cooks, only to commiserate with them. This book is fine fare, and this is all the more remarkable given the number of cooks involved. Of course, some dishes may seem better done (more original, better integrated) than others, but each has substance worth savoring.

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An Index to English Crown Grants in Georgia, 1755-1775.
Published for the R. J. Taylor, Jr., Foundation by The Reprint
Company, Spartanburg, S.C., 1989. Pp. x, 167; \$20.00.

The R. J. Taylor, Jr., Foundation has done it again. Since its inception, this organization has made a mark in the historical and genealogical professions with its sponsorship of a number of publications that help those working in these and other fields.

Now, with the appearance of *An Index to English Crown Grants in Georgia, 1755-1775*, they have done themselves one better, for this is the most important work in their long list.

As Professor Louis DeVorse points out in his interesting foreword, the genesis of this index can be traced back to the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act of 1970 which made establishing "paramount title" to marshlands based on English crown grants essential to any private claim of ownership. All of a sudden historians, geographers, and genealogists found themselves competing with "outsiders" for access to the records, and these interlopers quickly discovered just how difficult the scholar's task had been. One might argue, given the growing "Roots" phenomenon of the 1970s and the bicentennial surge of early Georgia scholarship, that public pressure might have eventually caused state officials to ease access to these records, but when the legal profession and corporate giants joined the fray, it was only a matter of time before action was taken.

Fortunately, that action was taken by people whose first interest was the past, not the present. Deputy Surveyor General Pat Bryant and her assistant, Marion R. Hemperley, with the enthusiastic support of Secretary of State Ben W. Fortson, Jr. (and the encouragement of a host of scholars like Professor DeVorse), began publishing abstracts of the more than five thousand crown grants. When they were done (1972-74) the state had brought out nine volumes. They were a treasure trove of information, as anyone who has used them will testify.

There was no comprehensive index, however, so a researcher seeking information about a person or place mentioned in a grant, but not the principal grantee, had to go through each grant—one at a time. Now that problem is solved. *An Index to English Crown Grants in Georgia, 1755-1775* is the answer to the researcher's prayer, for it contains all of the people and places mentioned in any British crown grant, presented in a "user friendly" fashion that will surely reduce the time overworked

staff have had to spend explaining how to use finding aids. This book is a model for the profession. The R. J. Taylor, Jr., Foundation deserves its thanks.

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The Black Experience: A Guide to Afro-American Resources in the Florida State Archives. Florida Department of State, Division of Library and Information Services and Bureau of Archives and Records Management. Tallahassee: 1988. Pp. iv, 52; illus.; paper; free while supplies last from The Florida State Archives, Department of State, R. A. Gray Building, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250.

The Black Experience joins Debra L. Newman's *Black History: A Guide to Civilian Records in the National Archives* as one of the few published guides describing holdings relating to the black experience within government archives. The Florida State Archives is to be commended for recognizing the need for such a guide and for taking the initiative to seek a grant from the Library Services and Construction Act to publish it.

The guide is a slim volume, only fifty-two pages including the index. Its stated purpose is to "identify and describe the sources within the Florida State Archives Collection that document the lives, culture, and experiences of Black Floridians; and to assist the researcher in locating the materials." Included are state government records, manuscript collections, local government records, the Florida Photographic Collection, and the Florida Collection (of the state library).

A brief introduction describes the purposes for the development of the guide, provides the rationale for what is included, and contains a discussion of the arrangement of the entries. This latter section on the arrangement identifies, in lay language, the difference between a series description for record groups ("reflect[s] the administrative role of the Department") and subgroups ("reflect[s] the programmatic functions of that unit"). A most helpful feature is a listing of the nine elements of a series entry description, with an example. Whenever pertinent, restrictions on the records are duly noted, thereby advising researchers before they make the trip to the archives.

In the introduction, the section "Other Sources" states that only the "richest sources of documentation on Black history discovered by the survey" are described in the guide but that other records containing relevant information are available. These other sources, which the guide claims might also be valuable for black history research, are listed by title and record group number in this section and in an appendix. Some confusion is created, however, by a statement that all of these record groups are listed in the appendix. A comparison of the appendix and the "Other Sources" section shows that some of the record groups listed in the latter do not appear in the appendix. Examples of the black history-related context of these records would have been useful.

The guide is arranged by type of material (that is, public records, manuscript collections, etc.), and within each section the entries are arranged alphabetically. A description of the record group precedes the series description; the series entries list type of material, a general description of the series, black history subjects, and in some cases the relationship of specific files to topics in black history.

A notable feature of the guide is the description of the photographic holdings. Although not unique--Newman's *Black History Guide* also included photographs--it is still not the norm

to describe photographs in a guide to archival and manuscript collections. The move by repositories toward intellectually linking photograph holdings with archival holdings even while physically segregating photographs because of format should be encouraged.

A four-page index "provides access by subject, personal names, geographic names and agency names" and refers to series, files, subjects within files, and photographs. There appear to be very few problems overall, although it should be noted that there are no cross references. This is not a major problem in such a small guide and could perhaps be overlooked. However, because the tone of this volume is accessibility to a general audience, not just scholars, cross references would have been especially helpful. For example, all references to *riots* were found under "racial violence." Logical, but not one's first choice. A "see reference" from *riots* would have been more useful in a volume of this type.

Of the over fifty items randomly checked in the index, the one glaring omission was an entry for "funeral homes," particularly since there are four entries for funeral homes in the section on manuscript collections. A few entries for indexed terms were overlooked (e.g., "busing" files on page 10, a series on page 13), and "minority business enterprises" should have been listed as "minority business development," the file name used most often.

A noteworthy attribute of the guide is the placement of photographs which serve to illustrate the records being described. The captions, unfortunately, do not indicate if the photographs come from the same record group or were obtained from another source. This apparently is not so much a problem of the guide but instead reflects the arrangement of the photographic collection; the cataloging does not appear to include information on provenance.

There are some minor problems with the guide which do not impact significantly on its overall usefulness. There are a few

collections in the section on manuscript collections in which it is not made clear what their relationship is to black history issues (e.g., W. A. Register, Jr., Oral History and T. P. Strickland Store Ledgers). In the Florida Photographic Collection the lack of a general heading and an overall description for the subsection on individual photographers' files mars this otherwise good feature of the guide. Each photographer's collection is treated at the same level (as identified by the typeface) as the other five photograph collections; collection descriptions do not exist for two of the photographers, nor are their first names provided. All of this could have been explained in a general descriptive statement for this subsection thereby avoiding the awkwardness of the current setup.

Another problem was that some of the information in the entry descriptions was not always relevant to an understanding of a department's involvement with black history-related issues. Some of the information seemed unnecessary, such as listing the article and section of the constitution establishing a particular unit and listing the boards and commissions the head of a department sat on within the government (e.g., descriptions for commission of education and state comptroller). In the latter example, no subsequent explanation shed light on the relationship of these memberships to black history concerns.

Despite these criticisms, the guide is a good tool for researching Florida black history which should prove helpful to a variety of researchers. The government records in particular are important sources of information for a wide range of subjects from education, civil rights, and legislative issues to genealogical sources, prison records, labor, and slavery.

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Guide to the Records of the United States Senate at the National Archives: 1789-1989. Robert W. Coren et al. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989. Pp. xii, 356; illus.; free while supplies last from the Center for Legislative Records, National Archives and Records Administration.

Guide to the Records of the United States House of Representatives at the National Archives: 1789-1989. Charles E. Schamel et al. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989. Pp. xix, 466; illus.; free while supplies last from the Center for Legislative Records, National Archives and Records Administration.

As one of its bicentennial projects the United States Senate has sponsored the publication of the *Guide to the Records of the United States Senate at the National Archives* (Senate Document 100-42). The United States House of Representatives, also in commemoration of the Bicentennial of Congress, has sponsored the publication of the *Guide to the Records of the United States House of Representatives at the National Archives* (Document 100-245). The Center for Legislative Archives of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has gained control over the massive records of Congress held at the National Archives and produced these workable guides.

Guides serve repositories and users in many ways. They provide assistance to researchers seeking more information on Congress or about committees on which congresspeople served. Congressional records give insight into the career and activities of a particular congressperson that might not be found in his papers housed at a repository other than the National Archives. Guides can tell what records are available for use and which records do not exist. A guide can inform researchers which records are available in formats other than the original:

microform, videodisk, electronic, or other. Led by information in a guide, researchers may or may not decide to visit the National Archives. The purpose of a guide to the repository is, most importantly, to further intellectual control over records and thereby assist researchers and the creators of the records. Guides also promote the use of archives and serve as public relations tools. The *Guide to the Records of the Senate* and the *Guide to the Records of the House of Representatives* fulfill these purposes.

The Senate guide builds upon a preliminary inventory (1789 through August 2, 1946; 6,558 cubic feet) of Senate records produced by the National Archives in 1950. The bicentennial guide encompasses records from 1789 to 1989 (20,000 cubic feet). The arrangement of the guides is not Congress by Congress but committee by committee. Given is a brief history of each Senate and House committee and a discussion of the records produced by the committee. Emphasis is placed on subject content. The introduction also states the limitations of the guides. Reading the guides gives a better understanding of the way Congress actually works and the procedures needed to use the records.

Chapter 1 of the guides, identical in both, does an excellent job of explaining the classification scheme used for congressional records from the late 1930s through 1947 for Senate records and through 1962 for House records. Records received after those dates are arranged by Congress, then committee or subcommittee and series, not by a classification scheme. The guides indicate by what file number items on a particular subject can be located and in some cases indicate the number of feet of materials. For example, records of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry which include subcommittees investigating the use of farm crops during World War II are in file number 78A-F1 and equal four feet of records. Researchers are cautioned, however, to use the new guides in conjunction with the *Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the United States House of Representatives, 1789-1946* and the loose-leaf inventory of Senate

record file numbers available from the NARA Center for Legislative Archives. This chapter is essential to using congressional records at the National Archives.

The guides identify nontextual records from Congress, tell where they are located in the National Archives, and list published materials which assist in using the nontextual records. Appendixes include lists of majority and minority leaders, secretaries, and microfilm publications; select bibliographies of historical works and published finding aids to both the House and Senate; and glossaries of legislative and archival terms. While this information is available in other places, it is extremely helpful to have it compiled in the guides.

Another useful section is the one on citing unpublished government documents. Too often researchers' difficulties in properly citing archival materials make it impossible for other researchers to relocate sources cited. These guides along with NARA's General Information Leaflet 17, *Citing Records in the National Archives of the United States*, provide the necessary assistance for researchers to cite complicated references properly.

One unusual feature of the guides is that each paragraph of the text is numbered, somewhat like a National Archives inventory. For example, paragraph 3 of chapter 1 begins with the number 1.3. Each paragraph of each chapter begins with a number. The index is keyed to the paragraph numbering system instead of to page numbers. The subject term "land offices" in the Senate guide refers the readers to "12.9," which is chapter 12, paragraph 9, instead of the page on which the information appears. This method may have been employed to make indexing and revision of the detailed text easier, but researchers may be misled into thinking that the paragraph numbers represent series and subseries numbers. Researchers may ask at the archives for "12.9" records instead of the records of the Committee on Public Lands, 1816-1946, to which chapter 12 of the guide refers. The

index to the Senate guide also has some inaccuracies. The citation for "Russell B. Long" references paragraph 9.33, but it should be 9.34. Other citations checked, however, were accurate.

Physically the books are large, 8½-by-11½ inches, and heavy. But considering the amount of information contained, a smaller book with readable type would be difficult to produce. The page format is well spaced with enough white space to facilitate reading without wasted space. The type is clear and readable. There is a possibility that the covers of the guides will not withstand heavy research use. The blue and burgundy color chips off the boards when the books are scratched or banged. In a few years all the color may chip off the covers.

These guides are a welcome addition to the National Archives and Records Administration guides. Research libraries should have copies in their central reference departments. For repositories that collect congressional papers, the guides offer an avenue for locating appropriate committee records for their researchers. Researchers using congressional papers can benefit by reviewing these guides before visiting the National Archives. All repositories which collect congressional papers need to acquire these volumes for their researchers and staff.

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Michigan Image Cataloging System Software

University of Michigan Software has released Michigan Image Cataloging System slide management software to organize data

for slide collections. Developed at the university's Department of the History of Art, the system is unique in its ability both to print labels and cards and to store databases on floppy disks (fifteen hundred records per disk). Because data can be removed from the working hard disk drive, it leaves the drive free for other files or for massive data manipulation. The data stored on the floppy disks can be transported to other computers, and the disks themselves can be backed up.

Michigan Image Cataloging System allows the user the option of easily combining databases or dividing them into smaller units. A typical slide collection may have fifty thousand to one hundred thousand images, thus making it necessary to divide the slide database into manageable segments in order to reduce work and search time.

The cataloging system is a user friendly program which offers extra-long field lengths (up to 110 characters) and a straightforward, menu-driven design. It can also print out more information on labels (four lines to a label, two labels per slide) than many other programs. The only limiting factor is the size of the label or card. Output can be onscreen or on cards with sizes of two-by-two inches, three-by-five inches, or four-by-five inches.

Some features include global replacement; merge option for combining databases; menu driven with escapes; drive selection (work with a floppy or hard disk at the same computer); printing any range of records or a single record; filter to eliminate duplication of slide call numbers (with an override for desired duplication); toggle switch to search, print, change, or enter either in record number order or slide call number order; compressed fields for storage (no unused field space is stored); Boolean searches; deletion of any range of records; and copying any range from one database to another.

Technical specifications for the system are IBM PC/XT/AT or compatible with hard disk, 640K RAM, DOS 2.0 or above, color

monitor and EGA or CGA, or monochrome monitor and IBM or Hercules graphics card.

The Michigan Image Cataloging System comes with full operating instructions and is available at a cost of \$1,000 per nonprofit site license (site defined as a single department within a university or museum) or \$2,000 per commercial license, plus \$10 shipping and handling. A demonstration disk is available upon request. For more information, contact University of Michigan Software, Intellectual Properties Office, 475 E. Jefferson, Room 2354, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1248 (phone 313-936-0435, fax 313-936-1330).

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Let The Record Show: Practical Uses for Historical Documents is the title of the New York State Archives and Records Administration's new audio-visual show about the importance of historical records to society. The sixteen-minute show highlights vignettes that demonstrate the benefits New Yorkers derive from using historical records: a research botanist using century-old botanical journals to document ecological changes at Goat Island, Niagara Falls; a member of a homeowners' organization near Syracuse studying the plans and blueprints of an old bridge to help determine if it is still safe; a Saratoga Springs teacher whose students study century-old community records for a better understanding of how people lived in the past; and a dance company in New York City that uses videotapes of its own performances and other records to plan future presentations. The basic message is that historical records are crucial to meet a great variety of important, practical needs.

The show includes a discussion on how historical records are selected, cared for, and made available in repositories across New York. It introduces the idea that well-developed, adequately supported programs are needed to administer these invaluable

resources. *Let the Record Show* is designed to appeal to a variety of audiences, including trustees of historical institutions, professional organizations, civic and cultural groups, and teachers and students. It can serve as an excellent device to stimulate discussion about the location, accessibility, and condition of historical records in one's own community.

For more information about this show in VHS or slide/tape format, contact Terri Sewell, State Archives and Records Administration, Cultural Education Center, Room 10A63, Albany, New York 12230.